

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

LAB-01 AID-10 EB-03 SIL-01 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PRS-01

COME-00 IO-03 RSR-01 /066 W

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P 250025Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4909

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAN JOSE 3021

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, CS

SUBJ: PTI INVOLVEMENT IN ELECTRICAL WORKERS' STRIKE

REF: SAN JOSE 2914, 2939 AND 3000

1. I WANT TO CALL THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION
TO A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS AND INCREASINGLY
ACUTE LABOR PROBLEM HERE, AND TO THE POTENTIAL
IN IT FOR SERIOUS AND ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES
FOR THE EMBASSY AND FOR THE US AS A RESULT OF
ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN THE DISPUTE BY THE PTI
REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE IN SAN JOSE. THE
FACTS OF THE LABOR DISPUTE ARE OUTLINED IN
REFTELS. PTI INVOLVEMENT CONSISTS OF ACTIVE

PARTICIPATION BY THE PTI REPRESENTATIVE,
LOU MOORE, A US CITIZEN, IN THE NEGOTIATIONS
BETWEEN SITET, ICE AND THE LABOR MINISTRY AS A
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SITET ADVISOR. MOORE HAS TAKEN AN ACTIVE

ROLE IN DISCUSSIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS, AND HAS BEEN, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, A PART OF THE SITET TEAM. IN ADDITION, A CENTRAL AMERICAN PTI CONGRESS HELD IN SAN JOSE LAST WEEK PUBLICLY ENDORSED THE SITET DEMANDS AND WALLACE LEGGE, PTI LATIN AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE, AND ALSO A US CITIZEN, PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED PTI SUPPORT FOR SITET IN THIS DISPUTE.

2. THE POTENTIAL FOR TROUBLE LIES IN THE FACT THAT THE DISPUTE APPEARS TO BE HEADED FOR A SERIOUS STRIKE AND A HEAD-TO-HEAD CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT. IF THAT HAPPENS, IT WILL END UP BEING A HIGHLY POLITICIZED SITUATION AND MAYBE EVEN A PUBLIC ORDER ONE. THE POTENTIAL EMBARRASSMENT TO US LIES IN THE RISK THAT WE WILL BE ACCUSED OF INTERFERING IN--AND BY THOSE INTERESTED IN GIGGING US, OF INSTIGATING--THE DISPUTE BECAUSE OF MOORE'S AND PTI'S ROLE. WE HAVE LITTLE HOPE THAT IN THE HEAT OF A CONFRONTATION, AND EVEN IN THE COOLER ATMOSPHERE OF THE PRESENT, THE DISTINCTION WILL BE PERCEIVED BETWEEN THE PTI AND THE USG/EMBASSY. AS SAN JOSE 3000 POINTED OUT, THE ALLEGATION OF US EMBASSY INTERFERENCE IS ALREADY BEING MADE, AND THE RECORD OF PRESIDENT FIGUERES' PERSISTENCE IN BELIEVING THAT SOME USG SUBSIDY OF LABOR MOVEMENTS OCCURS (NOT NECESSARILY THROUGH THE EMBASSY) DOES NOT MAKE US VERY SANGUINE. CHARGES OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND MORE SPECIFICALLY US INVOLVEMENT AND GOVT BELIEF IN THEM ARE A REAL PROBABILITY, AND OUR VULNERABILITY TO SUCH CHARGES IS INCREASED BY THE FACT THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF SITET GETS A SALARY SUBSIDY FROM DISTRICT 4 OF THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA, THEIR

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"SISTER UNION".

3. PERSISTENT REQUESTS FROM THE EMBASSY FOR LESS PTI DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN THE DISPUTE DID NOT SLOW DOWN THE TEMPO. CONSEQUENTLY SINCE I FELT THAT THE POTENTIAL FOR TROUBLE IS SERIOUS, I HELD A PERSONAL MEETING WITH LOU MOORE AUGUST 24. MOORE, WHO IS A VERY

DEDICATED, SENSITIVE, AND SENSIBLE PERSON, TELLS ME THAT HE CONCEIVES OF PTI AS BEING STET'S PARENT ORGANIZATION, AND THAT HIS (AND PTI'S) ROLE IS TO HELP THEM ALL THEY CAN. ESSENTIALLY THIS MEANS ADVICE AND TRAINING, BUT IT NEVERTHELESS INCLUDES, IN HIS VIEW, HELPING IN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, AND IN ORGANIZING. THEREFORE, HE HAS NO CHOICE, HE SAYS, BUT TO DO WHAT HE HAS DONE IN THIS DISPUTE. HE SAID HE RECOGNIZED THE RISKS TO HIMSELF AND TO THE PTI AND THE EMBARRASSMENT IT MIGHT CAUSE THE US, BUT HE FELT HE MUST CONTINUE. I TOLD HIM THAT UNFORTUNATELY MUCH MORE WAS NOW INVOLVED THAN JUST A LABOR DISPUTE OR SUPPORT TO A LABOR UNION. WHAT WAS HAPPENING WAS THAT PTI'S ACTIVIST ROLE WAS INEXORABLY, EVEN IF UNJUSTLY, DRAGGING THE USG INTO THE PICTURE AND GIVING US THE REAL POSSIBILITY OF SERIOUS FOREIGN RELATIONS PROBLEMS I ASKED HIM TO PULL BACK FROM SUCH ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT, AND HE SAID HE COULD NOT BUT WOULD BE AS SENSITIVE AS HE COULD TO THE CONSIDERATIONS I POSED.

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

LAB-01 AID-10 EB-03 SIL-01 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PRS-01

COME-00 IO-03 RSR-01 /066 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4910

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAN JOSE 3021

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4. I WANT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT NOTHING IN THIS CABLE IS INTENDED TO BE PERSONALLY CRITICAL OF LOU MOORE. HE IS A VERY ABLE ADVISOR, HAS BEEN VERY COOPERATIVE WITH THE EMBASSY GENERALLY, AND IS VERY SINCERE IN WHAT HE THINKS HE HAS TO DO. MY PURPOSE IN WRITING THIS CABLE IS TWO-FOLD: A) TO ALERT THE DEPARTMENT THAT WE ARE HEADING INTO A REAL PROBLEM, AND THERE IS NOT MUCH WE CAN DO AT THIS POINT BUT "HUNKER DOWN", AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, B) TO HIGHLIGHT

THE DEEPER CONCEPTUAL QUESTION OF WHAT KIND OF A ROLE PTI PLAYS AND THE RESULTS THAT THAT ACTIVITY CAN HAVE FOR THE U.S. AND ITS BROADER INTERESTS. THIS LATTER POINT IS ANOTHER MANIFESTATION OF THE CATEGORY OF PROBLEMS WHICH THE USG GETS ITSELF DRAGGED INTO OR STUCK WITH PROBLEMS SPRINGING OUT OF THINGS

IT DOES NOT CONTROL OR INFLUENCE, I.E., ACTIONS OF MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS, ETC. IF IN FACT THE PTI CONSIDERS THAT ITS REPRESENTATIVES CAN GET INVOLVED IN LOCAL LABOR DISPUTES,

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THE RISKS THAT THIS WILL CREATE "INTERVENTION" CASES AND INVOLVE US ARE VERY HIGH. FREQUENTLY, AS IN THIS CASE, THE ARGUMENT THAT THE PTI IS AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION NOT UNDER OUR CONTROL MAY HAVE LITTLE IF ANY PRACTICAL EFFECT, AND WHILE INTELLECTUALLY SATISFYING WILL NOT AS A PRACTICAL MATTER KEEP US OUT OF TROUBLE OR AVOID PROBLEMS STRETCHING FAR BEYOND JUST LABOR.

5. I WOULD APPRECIATE LEARNING WHAT THE DEPARTMENT'S UNDERSTANDING IS AS TO THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS IN THIS SENSE, ITS VIEWS ON THE DEEPER CONCEPTUAL ISSUE OF THE CONSEQUENCES TO U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AND RELATIONS OF SUCH A ROLE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR STRIKES, ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SANJO03021
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS VAKY
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SAN JOSE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730815/aaaaaksn.tel
Line Count: 217
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: SAN JOSE 2914, 2939 AND 3000
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <11 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PTTI INVOLVEMENT IN ELECTRICAL WORKERS' STRIKE
TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, CS, US, PTTI, (MOORE, LOU), (LEGGE, WALLACE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005